



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
2000 NAVY PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-2000

OPNAVINST 6420.1
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22 Dec 2005

OPNAV INSTRUCTION 6420.1

From: Chief of Naval Operation

Subj: PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR NON-SUBMARINE PERSONNEL
EMBARKED IN SUBMARINES

Ref: (a) NAVMED P-117
(b) CPI 339

Encl: (1) Submarine embarkation medical information form
(2) Physical Qualification for all Non-Submarine
Personnel Embarking in Submarines, Military and
Civilians
(3) Memorandum of Medical Screening

1. Purpose. To provide physical requirements for non-submarine personnel embarked in submarines, including non-submarine military personnel, all civilians, governmental/contractor employees, and military dependents. It is the intent of these physical requirements to preclude the embarkation of personnel in submarines who are at an increased risk of becoming medical liabilities. Embarkation is defined as the boarding of a submarine for the purpose of a voyage away from shore.

2. Cancellation. This OPNAV Instruction supersedes SECNAVINST 6420.1D. The SECNAV Instruction was cancelled under a separate cancellation memo.

3. Discussion. The basic physical standards for submarine personnel are specified in reference (a). Since these standards have been formulated for career submarine operational personnel, exceptions are warranted in the case of individuals being embarked for limited periods of time and for the performance of specific duties. In general, consideration must be given to the period of embarkation and the importance of the mission for each trip. Less stringent requirements can be tolerated for short duration cruises where return to port or air evacuation is feasible. Questionable or controversial medical conditions

22 Dec 2005

should be interpreted as risks and the individual should not be embarked.

22 Dec 2005

4. Action. The following requirements must be met for cruises of the duration indicated:

a. Cruises in local waters for short periods of time where there is no risk to true operational missions.

(1) Non-submarine personnel in this category are embarked in submarines for cruises of short duration. Examples include demonstration/familiarization cruises and departures concerned with builder's trials and tests of submarine equipment.

(2) Personnel are required to complete enclosure (1). Review of enclosure (1) should be performed in conjunction with a health record review. A submarine Independent Duty Corpsman (SUBIDC) or an Undersea Medical Officer (UMO) may perform the health record review using enclosure (2) as a reference. Enclosure (2) outlines basic conditions that preclude embarkation.

(3) A UMO shall make the final recommendation concerning the individual's fitness for embarkation.

(4) If the UMO determines that an individual requires further evaluation to certify suitability for embarkation, a consultation may be requested. Civilian personnel or their employers will be responsible for obtaining the required medical consultation and forwarding it to the screening UMO in a timely matter.

b. Cruises of Long Duration or Forward Deployed. All individuals are required to have:

(1) A physical exam within 12 months of the anticipated embarkation date certifying that they meet the requirements of enclosure (2).

(2) An interview and review of their health record. Enclosure (3) shall be used to document this review.

(3) A UMO shall make the final recommendation concerning the individual's fitness for embarkation. Completion of enclosure (1) is required within 1 month of scheduled embarkation.

(4) A health record review by the SUBIDC upon embarkation.

5. Responsibility. The responsibility for ensuring that each individual to be embarked on submarines for extended periods has received an appropriate physical examination rests with the command issuing the travel orders. Military non-submarine and civilian employees of the government should be examined by the command to which the individual is attached prior to commencement of travel to embarkation location. If medical examinations are ordered or offered to civilian employees of the government, the activity must follow procedures established by reference (b). Other civilian or non-governmental personnel should be examined by their company-designated physician or, if that is not appropriate, by their personal physician prior to reporting for embarkation. The examination shall utilize enclosure (2), and phone consultation with the local ISIC UMO as applicable.

6. Exceptions. The Commanding Officer will have ultimate authority on decision for an individual to embark. When controversy exists between the UMOs recommendation and the necessities of mission requirement, the cognizant UMO is required to personally brief the CO on the inherent risks, including the rationale for their recommendations. It is not anticipated that this situation will be a common occurrence, nor is it intended to put the CO in a position of making clinical decisions. The UMO is required to make recommendations that balance sound medical judgment with operational requirements. The most conservative solution does not necessarily serve the Navy's needs. The ability of the UMO to make such determinations will rest on their training, experience, and thoughtful analysis. When difficult decisions are encountered it is expected that opinion of the TYCOM medical officer and/or BUMED head of Undersea Medicine will be sought.

7. Report. The report requirement required by this instruction is exempt from reports control by OPNAVINST 5214.7.1

JOSEPH A. WALSH
Director,
Submarine Warfare Division

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SUBMARINE EMBARKATION MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM

Certain medical conditions are not compatible with the Submarine environment and may be beyond the capabilities of the Medical Department if medical intervention is required. The information requested below will help the Medical Department make a recommendation to the ship's Commanding Officer. In accordance with current Navy directives, pregnant females are not eligible for embarkation. You must bring all of your medications in sufficient quantities to cover your entire time aboard the ship.

Name: _____ Age: _____ Telephone number: _____

Personal Physician or Healthcare System: _____ Telephone number: _____

Current Medications and Dosage: _____

Drug Allergies: _____ Do you wear a medical alert tag? ☐ Yes ☐ No Reason: _____

Have you ever had or do you have any of the following (circle all that apply):

| | | | |
|-----------|----------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Asthma | Heart Disease | Shortness of Breath | Chronic Lung Disease |
| Diabetes | Cancer | Bleeding Problems | Recent Injury / Illness |
| Stroke | Claustrophobia | Dental Disease | Skin Disorder |
| Ulcers | Dizzy Spells | Communicable Disease | Previous Surgery |
| Pacemaker | Chest Pains | Kidney Disease | Severe Motion Sickness |

Please explain any of the items to which you have answered yes: _____

Have you had any other medical conditions not listed above? If so, please explain: _____

Intended Embarkee Signature: _____

Date signed: _____

This section to be completed by U.S. Navy Medical Personnel.

Comments: _____

Name/Command of Screener: _____

Signature: _____

Date signed: _____

Medical clearance determination (check one):
embarkation

Individual medically ☐ cleared ☐ not cleared for

Individual medically ☐ cleared ☐ not cleared for embarkation (check one)

Name/Command of UMO: _____

Signature: _____

Date signed: _____

22 Dec 2005

PHYSICAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR ALL NON-SUBMARINE PERSONNEL
EMBARKING IN SUBMARINES, MILITARY AND CIVILIAN

1. Individuals planning embarkation in submarines must be informed that only limited medical facilities are available on these ships. Even minor chronic conditions that require continuous treatment cannot be allowed. All non-submarine personnel embarking in submarines must be informed of the examinations required and the following physical qualifications that must be met.

a. Psychiatric. The psychological fitness of embarking personnel must be carefully evaluated. Disqualifying conditions include, but are not limited to: (1) Any evidence of tendencies which might prevent satisfactory adjustment to submarine life, to include claustrophobia, difficulties in interpersonal relations, lack of adaptability, and personality disorders, (2) any history of depression, psychosis, paranoia, neurosis, or other psychiatric disorders, (3) any history of chemical or alcohol dependency not in remission for 2 years. For cruises of long duration or forward deployment a psychological assessment shall be conducted by a psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, or an Undersea Medical Officer (UMO). If a psychiatrist, clinical psychologist, or an UMO is not available, the examining physician should make the determination in conjunction with a phone consultation with an UMO. This portion must be completed only at the time of initial examination.

b. Vision. Individuals embarked with unaided visual acuity of 20/70 or more in either eye must have at least two pairs of eyeglasses or contact lenses with the proper correction. A history of refractive corneal surgery shall be disqualifying unless three months have elapsed since the surgical procedure and there are no persistent visual defects or problems. Any history of glaucoma or deteriorating visional conditions such as macular degeneration is disqualifying.

c. Nose and Throat. Obstructed breathing due to nasal septal deviation, nasal polyps, chronic sinusitis or hypertrophic tonsils shall disqualify from embarkation.

d. Ears. Acute or chronic disease of the inner, middle or external ear; a history of chronic inability to equalize pressure manifested by repeated aural barotraumas; or persistent pain secondary to minute pressure variations such as in an aircraft or tunnel, shall be disqualifying. Auditory acuity

22 Dec 2005

shall be sufficient to permit the understanding of ordinary conversational speech. The use of a hearing aid is permissible.

e. Teeth. Individuals shall have adequate masticatory function for ingestion of the ordinary diet, and be in one of the following dental classes:

(1) Class I. Individuals requiring no dental treatment.

(2) Class II. Individuals requiring routine but not early treatment of conditions, such as:

(a) Moderate calculus.

(b) Prosthetic cases.

(c) Caries - not excessive or advanced.

(d) Periodontal diseases - not extensive or advanced.

f. Respiratory System. Disqualifying conditions include, but are not limited to: (1) any evidence of potentially active chronic inflammatory disease including tuberculosis, sarcoidosis, histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, bronchiectasis, or abscess, (2) confirmed history of bronchial asthma after age 12, (3) symptomatic chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or (4) a history of pneumothorax within two years of the date of the examination, or any history of spontaneous pneumothorax.

g. Cardiovascular System. Disqualifying conditions include, but are not limited to: (1) supraventricular or ventricular arrhythmia except of the sinus type, or other significant disturbance of heart or vascular system, (2) a history of angina, (see below) or previous myocardial infarction, and (3) uncontrolled or inadequately controlled hypertension, to include those individuals with associated heart or kidney disease.

h. Gastrointestinal and Urinary Systems. Disqualifying conditions include, but are not limited to: (1) individuals with a history of disease such as severe colitis, irritable bowel syndrome, peptic ulcer disease, recurrent or chronic pancreatitis, or chronic diarrhea unless they have been asymptomatic and on an unrestricted diet during the past two years, (2) a history of gastrointestinal tract perforation or hemorrhage until the cause has been discovered, corrected, and they have been asymptomatic for a period of 2 years, (3) a history of splenectomy unless secondary to traumatic injury with appropriate immunizations, or (4) a history of nephrolithiasis or urolithiasis.

i. Skin. Any acute or chronic skin disease other than mild localized acne is disqualifying.

22 Dec 2005

j. Skeletal and Extremities. Disqualifying conditions include, but are not limited to: (1) any disease of bone, joint, or muscle which limits mobility required on board, (2) chronic symptomatic low back pain, (3) presence of prostheses, casts, or splints, (4) chondromalacia patellae or a history thereof within the preceding 2 years.

k. Endocrine Disorders. Any poorly controlled endocrine disorder requiring constant treatment shall disqualify. All forms of diabetes mellitus, unless Type II under optimal control with no history of associated symptomatic events over the past year shall disqualify.

l. Rheumatologic Conditions. Any significant rheumatologic condition that has not been in remission for 2 years is disqualifying.

m. Neurologic Conditions. Any history of cerebrovascular incident, including stroke or TIAs is disqualifying. Any history of significant neurologic deficits, movement disorders, or neuromuscular diseases is disqualifying. If submarine riders have a history of seizure disorder, they should be seizure free for a 5-year time period.

n. Infectious Diseases. In addition to diseases listed above, any active infectious disease process is disqualifying.

o. Medication. Individuals who are taking any prescribed medications shall have this information documented for review by a UMO prior to embarkation. Riders who require prescribed narcotic medications are disqualified.

p. Miscellaneous. Pregnancy is disqualifying. Any recent surgery shall be disqualifying unless specifically addressed and cleared by the performing surgeon. All diseases and conditions, including any immune-compromised conditions, which require frequent medical attention or tend to physically incapacitate the individual, shall preclude embarkation. In questionable cases, the examining medical office is advised to consult with the medical department representative of the submarine concerned or any undersea medical officer for guidance.

22 Dec 2005

(date)

From: (Screening Medical Department Representative)

To: (Commanding Officer issuing travel orders)

Subj: PHYSICAL QUALIFICATION OF NON-SUBMARINE PERSONNEL
EMBARKING IN SUBMARINES ICO (Individual Screened)

Ref: (a) OPNAVINST 6420.1

1. The above named individual was examined in accordance with reference (a).

2. A health record review revealed no disqualifying findings. The individual has no diseases or conditions likely to require treatment or cause disability of any degree while embarked.

3. Comments.

(Signature)